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THE SEDITION COMMITTEE

OHIO 7 ON TRIAL FOR SEDITIOUS CONSPIRACY

IN NEW YORK
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NEW YORK, NY 10025

AUGUST 1988 SCHEDULE

AUGUST 16 UNITARIAN CHURCH 220 MAIN STREET NORTHAMPTON - 7PM	SEDITION COMMITTEE / OPEN MEETING
AUGUST 28 BETANCES PARK (Corner of Main & Park) HARTFORD, CT 2-6PM	RALLY TO COMMEMORATE THE AUGUST 30, 1985 ARREST OF 15 PUERTO RICAN INDEPENDENTISTAS MUSIC, SPEAKERS, & CULTURAL PRESENTATIONS

GUILLERMO MORALES IS FREE

On June 15, the Mexican Foreign Ministry rejected a longstanding US request to extradite Puerto Rican independentista Guillermo Morales, who escaped federal custody in 1979 after being convicted on explosives and weapons charges. On June 24, he was flown to political asylum and freedom in Cuba.

At his 1979 trial, Morales became the first independentista to declare himself a prisoner of war, asserting that under the Geneva Convention and UN resolutions, the US had no jurisdiction over any Puerto Rican anti-colonial guerrilla fighter.

In May 1983, Compañero Morales was arrested in Mexico. He later testified to being tortured, including electric shocks, by Mexican police. He said that members of the Joint Terrorist Task Force were in the adjoining room during the torture. Within days of his arrest, every Puerto Rican independence group and leading Mexican labor and leftist organizations took out a full-page ad in a Mexican daily demanding non-extradition and the granting of political asylum to Morales. For five years, independence activists led the anti-extradition campaign in the US, Puerto Rico, Mexico, and other Latin American countries.

In rejecting extradition, the Mexican Foreign Minister referred to Compañero Morales as a "political fighter for his country's independence" and stated that if he were extradited to the US he would be subject to "political persecution."

Upon his release Morales told wire services, "This is a recognition of the legitimate struggle for the independence of Puerto Rico." He has now won the right to pursue this struggle in freedom.

(Adepted from an article by Bob Lederer)

VICTORY AGAINST THE LEXINGTON CONTROL UNIT

In a recent federal court decision, US District Judge Barrington Parker ordered that political prisoners Silvia Baraldini and Susan Rosenberg be released from the Lexington Control Unit for women and transferred to general population. It is expected that this decision will also result in the transfer of Puerto Rican Prisoner of War Alejandrina Torres from this unit.

In his decision, Judge Parker ruled that a person's "past political associations or personal political beliefs" cannot be used to determine the placement of women prisoners in a particular unit or prison. Of further significance is Judge Parker's ruling that a person's "political views or affiliations" cannot be used to transfer a prisoner to the soon to be opened high security unit at Marianna, Florida.

The ultimate closing of the Lexington Control Unit is due in large part to the courageous example and resistance of the women who were forced to undergo almost two years of psychological torture and physical deprivation. Their example helped to galvanize a large campaign led by the Movimiento de Liberación Nacional - Puerto Rico, which succeeded in organizing broad support to force the closure of the control unit. One of the major accomplishments of this campaign has been to put the government on notice as to what the organized power of people can achieve in the struggle for human rights.

The immediate result of the judge's decision will be the removal of the women from the control unit. Given the conditions which they experience daily, this is no small victory. In addition, other women political prisoners, for example Carol Manning, who was designated to the Lexington Control Unit, will not be sent there.

Judge Parker's ruling makes it clear that there are political prisoners in US prisons and that they are subjected to a special kind of experimentation and mistreatment.

This is a victory we can all be proud of, but it is a limited victory and the campaign must not be abandoned. It is very likely that the Bureau of Prisons will try to reconstruct another type of control unit when Marianna prison opens. Also, other control unit prisons continue to operate in violation of the human rights of the thousands of prisoners confined inside them. The most well known is the federal penitentiary at Marion, Illinois, which has been in a 23-hour a day lock down since 1983. Despite Congressional investigations and inquiries by Amnesty International, the brutality of Marion continues. Less well known but of equal concern are the many control units that exist in the state prison systems from New York to California. Political prisoners are often targeted for lengthy imprisonment in these units.

Now is the time to broaden the campaign! Free all political prisoners!

For more information contact:

National Committee to Free Puerto Rican Prisoners of War
P.O. Box 476698, Chicago, Illinois 60647

Campaign to Shut Down the Lexington Control Unit
294 Atlantic Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11201

"The principal reservoir of revolutionary potential in Amerika lies in wait inside the Black colony." —*George Jackson*

GEORGE JACKSON

was the living embodiment of the Black Liberation Struggle. Condemned to spend the rest of his life in prison for a $70 robbery and his political activism, Comrade George refused to buckle under to his oppressors. A skilled organizer and a national leader of the Black Panther Party, the central passion of his life was the freedom of Black people. Subjected to years of solitary confinement and brutality, George rose above the moral decadence of his captors to become one of the most influential political writers of his era. He wrote two books that have been widely read and studied: "Soledad Brother: The Prison Writings of George Jackson" and "Blood In My Eye." These writings reflect centuries of rage and suffering experienced by Black people since the first African slave was brought to this country in chains. George wrote that Black people continue to this day to be victimized by white racism and economic exploitation. He outlined various strategies of political organization and resistance that he felt would better enable the Black community to survive and defend itself.

George was a teacher and a revolutionary; a writer and a warrior. He was articulate and courageous, but most of all George was a friend and comrade who paid the supreme sacrifice in service to the people. His spirit will always live!

George Jackson was shot to death by prison guards on August 21, 1971.

'Born to a premature death, a menial, subsistence-wage worker, odd-job man, the cleaner, the caught, the man under hatches, without bail—that's me, the colonial victim. Anyone who passed the civil service examination yesterday can kill me today with complete immunity. I've lived with repression every moment of my life, a repression so formidable that any movement on my part can only bring relief, the respite of small victory or the release of death. In every sense of the term, in every sense that's real, I'm a slave to and of property.'

George Jackson

'There should, I feel be one branch that is purely political, operating the rent strikes, the breakfast programs, the People's Bazaars where all sorts of food and clothing, utensils and tools are sold, hospitals or clinics (free, of course) . . . and the cottage shops to employ those who make clothing and canned food. Then there should be . . . the military.'

Jonathan Jackson

JONATHAN JACKSON

was George's younger brother. For two years he worked tirelessly to free the "Soledad Brothers" (including George) and other political prisoners. For two years he faced the brutal reality of continued killings of prisoners by guards and death threats against his brother George.

Jonathan was killed by police gunfire on August 7, 1970 as he attempted to free political prisoners, including Ruchell Magee, from a courthouse. He was 17 years old. Of Jonathan's death, George wrote, "We recognize all time in the future from the day of the manchild's death. Manchild, gun in hand, he was free for awhile. I guess that's more than most of us can expect." Jonathan never reached his full adulthood in a chronological sense but he certainly did with his spirit and commitment. He had the heart of a freedom fighter. He loved the people and was totally committed to removing the jackboot of oppression and racism from the neck of Black people. He challenged those of us who are white to fight white supremacy and support the Black Liberation struggle. He had the foresight to outline back then, at age 16 and 17, the necessity of building a movement that had clandestine organizations as an essential aspect of it. He was the best of the best.

From the moment George Jackson and other Black men and women begin to assert effective leadership, they become targets of assassination and imprisonment. From those fallen leaders of slave revolts to the murders of Medgar Evers, Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, Fred Hampton & dozens of members of the Black Panther Party, this country has demonstrated time and again that it will not tolerate a movement that fights for the aspirations and human rights of Black people.

The time of George Jackson was time of intense repression against those who struggle for social change. The U.S. invaded Vietnam. Anti-colonial wars in Southern Africa were on the verge of victory. The Sandinistas and other Latin revolutionaries were demanding an end to the dictatorships that ruled their countries.

Eighteen days after George Jackson was killed there was an uprising at Attica prison (N.Y.) led by Black and Latino prisoners. They sought minimal improvement in their conditions and stated they were men and not beasts and refused to be driven or beaten. New York state police stormed the prison and massacred 29 prisoners and 10 guards—all killed by police gunfire.

In 1971, information obtained from FBI files, lawsuits and a congressional investigation revealed a U.S. government campaign of sabotage, disruption, infiltration and assassination aimed at the political opposition in this country. The campaign was called COINTELPRO (Counter-intelligence Programs). One of the primary targets was, and remains to this day, the Black Liberation movement.

In the 1980's, the struggles for human rights and social change continue but at a tremendous cost in human life and suffering. The U.S. backs the contra attacks against Nicaragua. El Salvador's death squads and bomber pilots are trained by the U.S. military. African people are butchered every day in the streets of South Africa by a racist regime supported by the U.S.

Here in this country there are police forces that attack the very lifeblood of Black communities—the people. There is little difference between ku klux klan lynchings and the brutal murders of Black people by killer cops and vigilantes. Once again Black leaders that organize for the survival and freedom of Black people are killed and imprisoned. They are under attack because a system that allows people to suffer and die from the social neglect of homeessness, poor medical care and inadequate nutrition cannot withstand an organized resistance led by those whose hearts carry the indestructable beat of FREEDOM.

"The hypocrisy of Amerikan fascism forces it to conceal its attack on political offenders by the legal fiction of conspiracy laws and highly sophisticated frame-ups. The masses must be taught to understand the true function of prisons. Why do they exist in such numbers? What is the real underlying economic motive of crime and the official definition of types of offenders and victims." ***—George Jackson***

JULY 1988 TRIAL UPDATE

The OHIO 7 and their defense team spent the July court time in continuing jury selection. 211 people have been interviewed and 6 jurors have been selected. On July 18 Judge Young reduced the total number of jurors he will impanel from 20 to 18.

GOVERNMENT TRIES TO SILENCE LAWYER

On July 13, the government lawyers asked the judge to cite Ken King, Tom Manning's attorney, for contempt because he was quoted in a lengthy article about the sedition trial in the Boston Phoenix, a weekly news and entertainment paper. There is no gag order on this case and the OHIO 7 have given interviews to newspapers, radio and tv in the Springfield area as well as Boston. Judge Young did not act on the government's request, but told them to file written papers. On July 20, the government filed a motion, citing local Rule 40, asking to have Ken King admonished, fined, held in contempt and to have other unspecified sanctions placed against him.

The Boston Phoenix article was entitled FED EXCESSES and questioned the reason and logic of the government's methods in the OHIO 7 case. The article describes the recent suppression of the search of the Laaman home and the interrogation and attempted bribery of the children of the OHIO 7 as part of an overall pattern of going to any extreme to capture, convict and confine the OHIO 7 once they were labelled as revolutionaries or "terrorist".

The justice department's efforts to silence and intimidate the OHIO 7 lawyers is further evidence of just what this article was questioning. The OHIO 7 team will fight this motion, defend Ken King and everyone's right to speak to the public about this trial, the sedition charges and the need for resistance.

JUROR DESCRIBES WESTERN SWEEP

An example of the government's history of excess in this case came up during jury selection on July 11. A prospective juror, a pharmacist, explained what had happened to him in 1984. Local police (under fbi direction in an operation called Western Sweep) came to his home, as well as the homes of other pharmacists, and showed him pictures of the OHIO 7 and other political fugitives and their small children. These cops told him that these people may seek medicines for their children, and that he should be alert to this possibility and work with the police. This individual explained that nothing like this had ever happened to him or to his colleaques before and that it had made him feel very uncomfortable. The judge eliminated this juror.

MANDELA BIRTHDAY TRIBUTE

On July 18, Danny Meyers, Jaan Laaman's lawyer, made a short but strong statement in court commemorating Nelson Mandela's birthday. The OHIO 7 and their lawyers stood in respect as tribute was paid to Mandela and to the struggle for a free South Africa. Part of this sedition trial against the OHIO 7 charges that they conducted active and militant support activities for the struggle in Azania/South Africa.

The OHIO 7 case is now in recess for three weeks until August 15, when jury selection will continue on the usual schedule of 9:30 am to 4:00 pm, Monday through Thursday.

JURY SELECTION: A DAY IN COURT

Despite what the attorneys and defendants said about the high yawn factor inherent in jury selection, the morning I attended in mid-July proved both politically/legally and psychologically revealing. The morning opened with the judge addressing the prospective jurors, uttering his well-rehearsed speech on their obligation not to discuss any aspect of what goes on in the courtroom, any aspect of the case with any one. He also impressed upon them that they are the reason why the democratic system works, that through them justice can be realized. They are the most critical aspect of the process.

With these statements echoing in the courtroom, the morning session began with a continuation of the examination of potential jurors. Soon, a problem arose. The judge got wind of the fact that a prospective juror had made remarks in the company of others also waiting, that justice in America is not always justice; that justice works for some but not all, depending on who you are. The judge proceeded to ask every subsequent person his or her recollections of the comments and how he or she or others had responded to these remarks. It became very important to uncover the true position held by each person regarding these comments.

Another woman was eliminated by the judge when she admitted valuing the word of a policeman over the word of a person not a law-enforcement officer. After what I heard in the morning session it became much more apparent why this process of jury selection is taking so long.

Christina Ryan

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